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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO

25X1

COUNTRY

East Germany

DATE DISTR 4 February 1955

SUBJECT

Practice Ammunitions Requirements of the
Ministry of the Interior

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PLACE
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1. On 25 October 1954, Major General Menzel (fnu), chief of the Main Administration for Finance and Organization of the East German Ministry of the Interior, appealed to Richard Goschuetz, State Secretary in the Ministry for Heavy Industry, for his intervention in getting an order filled for about 300,000 practice cartridges which had been given to VEB Presswerk Spremberg by the Ministry of the Interior. In his appeal, Menzel accused the directorate of that plant of being remiss in its work. Although the contract for the ammunition had been signed on 24 April 1954, setting the delivery date as in the period between 1 July and 25 November 1954, at the suggestion of the plant, it had been learned on a visit to the plant on 20 October that as of that date the work on the ammunition had not even begun.
2. The reason given by VEB Presswerk Spremberg for the delay was that a change had been made by the Ministry of the Interior in the specifications for the cartridges. The method of securing the metal cartridge bases (Patronenboeden) on the ammunition previously manufactured by VEB Presswerk Spremberg had been found to be unsatisfactory and it was agreed that they should be secured with threaded pins (Gewindezapfen) instead of being glued (einkleben). The plant did not succeed in making models of the cartridges with the new method of securing the bases until the end of September. When the Administration for Planning and Procurement of the Ministry of the Interior complained at the delay, the plant cited the shortage of about eight metric tons of automatic steel (Automatenstahl), which was required to make the cartridge bases.
3. At a discussion of the matter with an official of the Ministry of the Interior on 19 August 1954, the plant had given written assurances that the complete order of ammunition would be delivered by the final delivery date agreed on - 25 November 1954. However, Menzel stated, it was obvious that the plant did not have sufficient productive capacity to meet this deadline and that the ammunition would not be delivered on time.

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